

# RAISING the Bar

Highlights and Happenings- March 2017



Welcome to third installment of our **“RAISING the BAR”** newsletter. This newsletter is intended to keep you and important stakeholders abreast of the latest highlights and happenings for the **RAISE<sup>UP</sup> Texas** expansion initiative. Based on the overwhelming success of the demonstration project and your generous support, **RAISE<sup>UP</sup> Texas** is currently utilized by 14 Central Texas schools, directly reaching 28,000 students and training over 1,100 teachers in skills to enhance teaching and learning. Enjoy reading!

## Meet the Newest Class of **RAISE<sup>UP</sup> Texas** SIM Professional Developers!



Completion Celebration on February 24, 2017!

Only two years after the start of the **RAISE<sup>UP</sup> Texas** Expansion, the first class of educators are now certified, through our partnership with KUCRL, to offer SIM PD to their campuses. While **RAISE<sup>UP</sup> Texas** incorporates many different aspects of campus transformation and includes best practices from multiple sources, the Strategic Instruction Model is foundational to all **RAISE<sup>UP</sup> Texas** classrooms.



These educators completed a year long program to prove their proficiency with SIM routines or strategies. In addition to classroom experience, SIM research, a book study, and attending a three day institute, each potential professional developer helped to plan and facilitated multiple sessions of SIM PD for their campuses. This practical experience of participating in the development of **RAISE<sup>UP</sup> Texas** adult learning sessions along with the **RAISE<sup>UP</sup>** team ensures that each newly certified professional developer is able to provide high quality and successful learning opportunities for the educators on their campuses. **RAISE<sup>UP</sup> Texas** provides campuses with the means to sustain their work beyond the initial 3.5 years of intensive support. An important part of this sustainability model is ensure that each campus has multiple certified SIM professional developers to continue providing learning opportunities to their staff in the future. Included in this first class of certified SIM professional developers are educators from Austin, Del Valle, Elgin, Hutto, Lockhart, and Round Rock ISDs. The second class of potential professional developers have already started working on this process and will attend the three day institute on June 5-7, 2017. Each of the districts already mentioned will send additional educators as well as new participants from San Marcos and Bastrop ISDs.



Matt, Riza, and Laila ready to share their expertise!

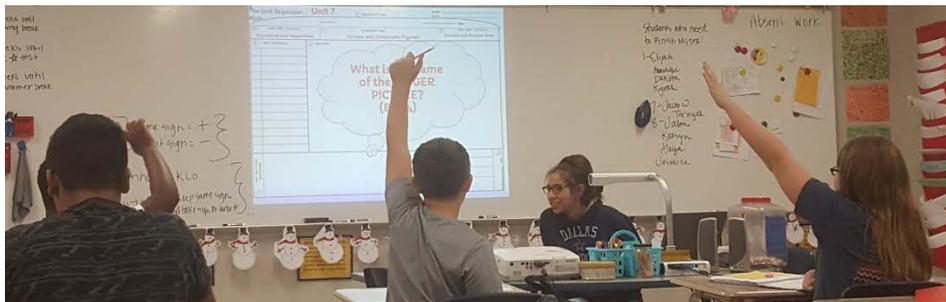
## **RAISE<sup>UP</sup> Texas** at TASA!

In January, **RAISE<sup>UP</sup> Texas** Program Director Matt Pope, Elgin ISD Leader Laila Olivarez, and Principal Riza Cooper of Elgin Middle School shared their **RAISE<sup>UP</sup> Texas** experience with school administrators from all corners of Texas. As **RAISE<sup>UP</sup> Texas** practitioners, Riza and Laila presented to administrators the positive transformation they have been able to achieve at Elgin Middle School, improving the educational experience for all students. As a district administrator, Laila also explained how **RAISE<sup>UP</sup> Texas** supports new to profession teachers by utilizing an explicit planning process and structured instructional sequences for the classroom. Many thanks to Laila and Riza for sharing their experiences and continuing to show the impact that **RAISE<sup>UP</sup> Texas** can have for learning communities across our state.



## Students Lead the Learning!

As educators and students on **RAISE<sup>up</sup> Texas** campuses become more knowledgeable about tools and routines used for all classrooms, some students are finding themselves in the driver's seat when class begins. Utilizing the same routines, such as the Unit Organizer, across the entire



campus ensures students are familiar enough with the process to lead the lesson. When students lead the lesson, they are engaged with the content in a new and more rigorous manner. For classmates participating in a student-led routine, they also become more engaged and interact with the content presented in meaningful ways. In addition to the learning benefits students are gaining from leadership in the classroom, teachers report students are becoming more confident speaking up in front of their peers and are more likely to engage in purposeful conversations after this experience. As student leadership in the classroom grows across **RAISE<sup>up</sup> Texas** campuses, we can be confident that new students are gaining the skills they need to succeed beyond the classroom.

### The 2017 KUCRL Learning Conference

What Research says about Leading,  
Learning, & Teaching  
Lawrence, KS  
July 12-14, 2017

## **RAISE<sup>up</sup> Texas** on the road!

This summer, the **RAISE<sup>up</sup> Texas** team along with instructional coaches and administrators from many **RAISE<sup>up</sup>** campuses will attend the annual KUCRL Learning Conference at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. This conference offers a chance for teachers, administrators and educational leaders to expand their understanding and incorporate new ideas about how to best support staff transformation on their campus. As well as learning from experts and practitioners from around the world, the **RAISE<sup>up</sup> Texas** team will be presenting several sessions on the work happening here in Central Texas. As **RAISE<sup>up</sup>** campuses in Central Texas continue to experience success, the **RAISE<sup>up</sup>** team strives to help others learn how to improve the educational experience for all students. In addition to presentations by **RAISE<sup>up</sup>** team members, instructional coaches from some Central Texas **RAISE<sup>up</sup>** campuses will participate in a panel discussion to share their expertise with others using similar campus-wide tools. This is an amazing opportunity to expand the capability for education transformation in Central Texas and to share our story with new audiences!



The **RAISE<sup>up</sup> Texas** initiative is led by E3 Alliance, an education collaborative that works to support schools across Central Texas. It uses the Strategic Instruction Model, which was developed by the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning. To learn more about the program, please visit the following websites:

<http://raiseuptexas.org/>

<http://kucrl.org/sim/>

<http://e3alliance.org/category/topic/initiative-raiseup-texas/>

